

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 07579 080653Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 DHA-05 /065 W

-----008363 080701Z /20

P R 080550Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6254

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 7579

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, KS

SUBJ: ROKG ARRESTS POET FOR EM-9 VIOLATION

1. YANG SONG-U WAS ARRESTED AND CHARGED WITH VIOLATION OF
EM-9 IN THE WAKE OF PUBLICATION OF HIS POEM "DIARY OF A
SLAVE" IN THE JUNE ISSUE OF THE JAPANESE MAGAZINE SEKAI.

2. EMBOFF RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUND FROM A PERSONAL
FRIEND OF YANG. YANG WAS A SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER WITH
RECOGNIZED LITERARY TALENT AND AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN HUMAN
RIGHTS. IN 1975 HE WROTE A POEM ENTITLED "WINTER REPUBLIC"
WHICH CAME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE AUTHORITIES WHO FORCED
HIM OUT OF HIS TEACHING POSITION. YANG WITHDREW TO A
MONASTERY TO WRITE AND MEDITATE. HE WAS COMMISSIONED BY
THE KNCC TO POLISH A NEW TEXT OF THE BIBLE WHICH HAD BEEN
PREPARED BY A COMMISSION OF SCHOLARS. HE FINISHED THIS
JOB ABOUT A YEAR AGO.

3. A JAPANESE FRIEND SAW THE MANUSCRIPT OF "DIARY OF A
SLAVE" AND GAVE IT TO SEKAI WITHOUT YANG'S PERMISSION.
AT FIRST YANG REFUSED TO PERMIT PUBLICATION OF HIS WORK
SINCE HE WAS SURE IT WOULD LAND HIM IN JAIL AND HE
THOUGHT HE COULD DO MORE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WHILE AT
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 07579 080653Z

LIBERTY. HOWEVER, HE FINALLY DECIDED THAT HE WAS EVADING HIS PUBLIC DUTY AND GRANTED SEKAI PERMISSION TO
PRINT HIS WORK.

4. BY STRANGE COINCIDENCE, YANG'S ARREST COINCIDES
WITH THE PUBLICATION IN KOREA OF HIS FIRST MAJOR SET
OF WORKS. THE BOOK BEARS THE TITLE "WINTER REPUBLIC"

AND FEATURES THAT POEM. THE FIRST PRINTING IS ON SALE
AND AUTHORITIES HAVE POSED NO OBJECTIONS AS YET. AP-
PRENTLY AUTHORITIES NO LONGER CONSIDER THIS WORK AS
OBJECTIONABLE AS THEY DID TWO YEARS AGO.

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Message Attributes

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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARRESTS, WRITERS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 08-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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SAS ID: 1347242
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Status: NATIVE
Subject: ROKG ARRESTS POET FOR EM-9 VIOLATION
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, KS
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